

the audit documentation must be retained for seven years from the date the engagement ceased.

15. Prior to the report release date, the auditor must have completed all necessary auditing procedures and obtained sufficient evidence to support the representations in the auditor's report. A complete and final set of audit documentation should be assembled for retention as of a date not more than 45 days after the report release date (*documentation completion date*). If a report is not issued in connection with an engagement, then the documentation completion date should not be more than 45 days from the date that fieldwork was substantially completed. If the auditor was unable to complete the engagement, then the documentation completion date should not be more than 45 days from the date the engagement ceased.

16. Circumstances may require additions to audit documentation after the report release date. Audit documentation must not be deleted or discarded after the documentation completion date, however, information may be added. Any documentation added must indicate the date the information was added, the name of the person who prepared the additional documentation, and the reason for adding it.

17. Other standards require the auditor to perform procedures subsequent to the report release date in certain circumstances. For example, in accordance with AU sec. 711, *Filings Under Federal Securities Statutes*, auditors are required to perform certain procedures up to the effective date of a registration statement.<sup>3/</sup> The auditor must identify and document any additions to audit documentation as a result of these procedures consistent with the previous paragraph.

18. The office of the firm issuing the auditor's report is responsible for ensuring that all audit documentation sufficient to meet the requirements of paragraphs 4-13 of this standard is prepared and retained. Audit documentation supporting the work performed by other auditors (including auditors associated with other offices of the firm, affiliated firms, or non-affiliated firms), must be retained by or be accessible to the office issuing the auditor's report.<sup>4/</sup>

19. In addition, the office issuing the auditor's report must obtain, and review and retain, prior to the report release date, the following documentation related to the work

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<sup>3/</sup> Section 11 of the Securities Act of 1933 makes specific mention of the auditor's responsibility as an expert when the auditor's report is included in a registration statement under the 1933 Act.

<sup>4/</sup> Section 106(b) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 imposes certain requirements concerning production of the work papers of a foreign public accounting firm on whose opinion or services the auditor relies. Compliance with this standard does not substitute for compliance with Section 106(b) or any other applicable law.

performed by other auditors (including auditors associated with other offices of the firm, affiliated firms, or non-affiliated firms):

- a. An engagement completion document consistent with paragraphs 12 and 13.

Note: This engagement completion document should include all cross-referenced, supporting audit documentation.

- b. A list of significant fraud risk factors, the auditor's response, and the results of the auditor's related procedures.
- c. Sufficient information relating to any significant findings or issues that are inconsistent with or contradict the final conclusions, as described in paragraph 8.
- d. Any findings affecting the consolidating or combining of accounts in the consolidated financial statements.
- e. Sufficient information to enable the office issuing the auditor's report to agree or to reconcile the financial statement amounts audited by the other auditor to the information underlying the consolidated financial statements.
- f. A schedule of audit adjustments, including a description of the nature and cause of each misstatement.
- g. All significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting, including a clear distinction between those two categories.
- h. Letters of representations from management.
- i. All matters to be communicated to the audit committee.

If the auditor decides to make reference in his or her report to the audit of the other auditor, however, the auditor issuing the report need not perform the procedures in this paragraph and, instead, should refer to AU sec. 543, *Part of Audit Performed by Other Independent Auditors*.

20. The auditor also might be required to maintain documentation in addition to that required by this standard.<sup>5/</sup>

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<sup>5/</sup> For example, the SEC requires auditors to retain, in addition to documentation required by this standard, memoranda, correspondence, communications (for example, electronic mail), other documents, and records (in the

#### Effective Date

21. This standard is effective for audits of financial statements, which may include an audit of internal control over financial reporting, with respect to fiscal years ending on or after November 15, 2004. For other engagements conducted pursuant to the standards of the PCAOB, including reviews of interim financial information, this standard takes effect beginning with the first quarter ending after the first financial statement audit covered by this standard.

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form of paper, electronic, or other media) that are created, sent, or received in connection with an engagement conducted in accordance with auditing and related professional practice standards and that contain conclusions, opinions, analyses, or data related to the engagement. (*Retention of Audit and Review Records*, 17 CFR §210.2-06, effective for audits or reviews completed on or after October 31, 2003.)

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## APPENDIX A

### *Background and Basis for Conclusions*

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## ***Introduction***

A1. This appendix summarizes considerations that the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB" or "Board") deemed significant in developing this standard. This appendix includes reasons for accepting certain views and rejecting others.

A2. Section 103(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the "Act") directs the Board to establish auditing standards that require registered public accounting firms to prepare and maintain, for at least seven years, audit documentation "in sufficient detail to support the conclusions reached" in the auditor's report. Accordingly, the Board has made audit documentation a priority.

## ***Background***

A3. Auditors support the conclusions in their reports with a work product called *audit documentation*, also referred to as *working papers* or *work papers*. Audit documentation supports the basis for the conclusions in the auditor's report. Audit documentation also facilitates the planning, performance, and supervision of the engagement and provides the basis for the review of the quality of the work by providing the reviewer with written documentation of the evidence supporting the auditor's significant conclusions. Examples of audit documentation include memoranda, confirmations, correspondence, schedules, audit programs, and letters of representation. Audit documentation may be in the form of paper, electronic files, or other media.

A4. The Board's standard on audit documentation is one of the fundamental building blocks on which both the integrity of audits and the Board's oversight will rest. The Board believes that the quality and integrity of an audit depends, in large part, on the existence of a complete and understandable record of the work the auditor performed, the conclusions the auditor reached, and the evidence the auditor obtained that supports those conclusions. Meaningful reviews, whether by the Board in the context of its inspections or through other reviews, such as internal quality control reviews, would be difficult or impossible without adequate documentation. Clear and comprehensive audit documentation is essential to enhance the quality of the audit and, at the same time, to allow the Board to fulfill its mandate to inspect registered public accounting firms to assess the degree of compliance of those firms with applicable standards and laws.

A5. The Board began a standards-development project on audit documentation by convening a public roundtable discussion on September 29, 2003, to discuss issues and hear views on the subject. Participants at the roundtable included representatives from public companies, public accounting firms, investor groups, and regulatory organizations.

A6. Prior to this roundtable discussion, the Board prepared and released a briefing paper on audit documentation that posed several questions to help identify the objectives – and the appropriate scope and form – of audit documentation. In addition, the Board asked participants to address specific issues in practice relating to, among other things, changes in audit documentation after release of the audit report, essential elements and the appropriate amount of detail of audit documentation, the effect on audit documentation of a principal auditor's decision to use the work of other auditors, and retention of audit documentation. Based on comments made at the roundtable, advice from the Board's staff, and other input the Board received, the Board determined that the pre-existing standard on audit documentation, Statement on Auditing Standards ("SAS") No. 96, *Audit Documentation*, was insufficient for the Board to discharge appropriately its standard-setting obligations under Section 103(a) of the Act. In response, the Board developed and issued for comment, on November 17, 2003, a proposed auditing standard titled, *Audit Documentation*.

A7. The Board received 38 comment letters from a variety of interested parties, including auditors, regulators, professional associations, government agencies, and others. Those comments led to some changes in the requirements of the standard. Also, other changes made the requirements easier to understand. The following sections summarize significant views expressed in those comment letters and the Board's responses to those comments.

### ***Objective of This Standard***

A8. The objective of this standard is to improve audit quality and enhance public confidence in the quality of auditing. Good audit documentation improves the quality of the work performed in many ways, including, for example:

- Providing a record of actual work performed, which provides assurance that the auditor accomplishes the planned objectives.
- Facilitating the reviews performed by supervisors, managers, engagement partners, engagement quality reviewers,<sup>1/</sup> and PCAOB inspectors.
- Improving effectiveness and efficiency by reducing time-consuming, and sometimes inaccurate, oral explanations of what was done (or not done).

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<sup>1/</sup> The engagement quality reviewer is referred to as the concurring partner reviewer in the membership requirements of the AICPA SEC Practice Section. The Board adopted certain of these membership requirements as they existed on April 16, 2003. Some firms also may refer to this designated reviewer as the second partner reviewer.

A9. The documentation requirements in this standard should result in more effective and efficient oversight of registered public accounting firms and associated persons, thereby improving audit quality and enhancing investor confidence.

A10. Inadequate audit documentation diminishes audit quality on many levels. First, if audit documentation does not exist for a particular procedure or conclusion related to a significant matter, it casts doubt as to whether the necessary work was done. If the work was not documented, then it becomes difficult for the engagement team, and others, to know what was done, what conclusions were reached, and how those conclusions were reached. In addition, good audit documentation is very important in an environment in which engagement staff changes or rotates. Due to engagement staff turnover, knowledgeable staff on an engagement may not be available for the next engagement.

### ***Audit Programs***

A11. Several commenters suggested that audit documentation should include audit programs. Audit programs were specifically mentioned in SAS No. 96 as a form of audit documentation.

A12. The Board accepted this recommendation, and paragraph 4 in the final standard includes audit programs as an example of documentation. Audit programs may provide evidence of audit planning as well as limited evidence of the execution of audit procedures, but the Board believes that signed-off audit programs should generally not be used as the sole documentation that a procedure was performed, evidence was obtained, or a conclusion was reached. An audit program aids in the conduct and supervision of an engagement, but completed and initialed audit program steps should be supported with proper documentation in the working papers.

### ***Reviewability Standard***

A13. The proposed standard would have adapted a standard of reviewability from the U.S. General Accounting Office's ("GAO") documentation standard for government and other audits conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards ("GAGAS"). The GAO standard provides that "Audit documentation related to planning, conducting, and reporting on the audit should contain sufficient information to enable an experienced auditor who has had no previous connection with the audit to ascertain from the audit documentation the evidence that supports the auditors' significant judgments and conclusions."<sup>2/</sup> This requirement has been important in the field of government auditing because government audits have long been reviewed by

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<sup>2/</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, *Government Auditing Standards*, "Field Work Standards for Financial Audits" (2003 Revision), paragraph 4.22.

GAO auditors who, although experienced in auditing, do not participate in the actual audits. Moreover, the Panel on Audit Effectiveness recommended that sufficient, specific requirements for audit documentation be established to enable public accounting firms' internal inspection teams as well as others, including reviewers outside of the firms, to assess the quality of engagement performance.<sup>3/</sup> Audits and reviews of issuers' financial statements will now, under the Act, be subject to review by PCAOB inspectors. Therefore, a documentation standard that enables an inspector to understand the work that was performed in an audit or review is appropriate.

A14. Accordingly, the Board's proposed standard would have required that audit documentation contain sufficient information to enable an experienced auditor, having no previous connection with the engagement, to understand the work that was performed, the name of the person(s) who performed it, the date it was completed, and the conclusions reached. This experienced auditor also should have been able to determine who reviewed the work and the date of such review.

A15. Some commenters suggested that the final standard more specifically describe the qualifications of an experienced auditor. These commenters took the position that only an engagement partner with significant years of experience would have the experience necessary to be able to understand all the work that was performed and the conclusions that were reached. One commenter suggested that an auditor who is reviewing audit documentation should have experience and knowledge consistent with the experience and knowledge that the auditor performing the audit would be required to possess, including knowledge of the current accounting, auditing, and financial reporting issues of the company's industry. Another said that the characteristics defining an experienced auditor should be consistent with those expected of the auditor with final responsibility for the engagement.

A16. After considering these comments, the Board has provided additional specificity about the meaning of the term, *experienced auditor*. The standard now describes an experienced auditor as one who has a reasonable understanding of audit activities and has studied the company's industry as well as the accounting and auditing issues relevant to the industry.

A17. Some commenters also suggested that the standard, as proposed, did not allow for the use of professional judgment. These commenters pointed to the omission of a statement about professional judgment found in paragraph 4.23 of GAGAS that states, "The quantity, type, and content of audit documentation are a matter of the auditors' professional judgment." A nearly identical statement was found in the interim auditing standard, SAS No. 96, *Audit Documentation*.

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<sup>3/</sup> Panel on Audit Effectiveness, *Report and Recommendations* (Stamford, Ct: Public Oversight Board, August 31, 2000).



A18. Auditors exercise professional judgment in nearly every aspect of planning, performing, and reporting on an audit. Auditors also exercise professional judgment in the documentation of an audit and other engagements. An objective of this standard is to ensure that auditors give proper consideration to the need to document procedures performed, evidence obtained, and conclusions reached in light of time and cost considerations in completing an engagement.

A19. Nothing in the standard precludes auditors from exercising their professional judgment. Moreover, because professional judgment might relate to any aspect of an audit, the Board does not believe that an explicit reference to professional judgment is necessary every time the use of professional judgment may be appropriate.

### ***Audit Documentation Must Demonstrate That the Work was Done***

A20. A guiding principle of the proposed standard was that auditors must document procedures performed, evidence obtained, and conclusions reached. This principle is not new and was found in the interim standard, SAS No. 96, *Audit Documentation*, which this standard supersedes. Audit documentation also should demonstrate compliance with the standards of the PCAOB and include justification for any departures.

A21. The proposed standard would have adapted a provision in the California Business and Professions Code which provides that if documentation does not exist, then there is a rebuttable presumption that the work had not been done.

A22. The objections to this proposal fell into two general categories: the effect of the rebuttable presumption on legal proceedings and the perceived impracticality of documenting every conversation or conclusion that affected the engagement. Discussion of these issues follows.

#### **Rebuttable Presumption**

A23. Commenters expressed concern about the effects of the proposed language on regulatory or legal proceedings outside the context of the PCAOB's oversight. They argued that the rebuttable presumption might be understood to establish evidentiary rules for use in judicial and administrative proceedings in other jurisdictions.

A24. Some commenters also had concerns that oral explanation alone would not constitute persuasive other evidence that work was done, absent any documentation. Those commenters argued that not allowing oral explanations when there was no documentation would essentially make the presumption "irrebuttable." Moreover, those commenters argued that it was inappropriate for a professional standard to predetermine for a court the relative value of evidence.

A25. The Board believes that complete audit documentation is necessary for a quality audit or other engagement. The Board intends the standard to require auditors to document procedures performed, evidence obtained, and conclusions reached to improve the quality of audits. The Board also intends that a deficiency in documentation is a departure from the Board's standards. Thus, although the Board removed the phrase *rebuttable presumption*, the Board continues to stress, in paragraph 9 of the standard, that the auditor must have persuasive other evidence that the procedures were performed, evidence was obtained, and appropriate conclusions were reached with respect to relevant financial statement assertions.

A26. The term *should* (presumptively mandatory responsibility) was changed to *must* (unconditional responsibility) in paragraph 6 to establish a higher threshold for the auditor. Auditors have an unconditional requirement to document their work. Failure to discharge an unconditional responsibility is a violation of the standard and Rule 3100, which requires all registered public accounting firms to adhere to the Board's auditing and related professional practice standards in connection with an audit or review of an issuer's financial statements.

A27. The Board also added two new paragraphs to the final standard to explain the importance and associated responsibility of performing the work and adequately documenting all work that was performed. Paragraph 7 provides a list of factors the auditor should consider in determining the nature and extent of documentation. These factors should be considered by both the auditor in preparing the documentation and the reviewer in evaluating the documentation.

A28. In paragraph 9 of this standard, if, after the documentation completion date, as a result of a lack of documentation or otherwise, it appears that audit procedures may not have been performed, evidence may not have been obtained, or appropriate conclusions may not have been reached, the auditor must determine, and if so demonstrate, that sufficient procedures were performed, sufficient evidence was obtained, and appropriate conclusions were reached with respect to the relevant financial statement assertions. In those circumstances, for example, during an inspection by the Board or during the firm's internal quality control review, the auditor is required to demonstrate with persuasive other evidence that the procedures were performed, the evidence was obtained, and appropriate conclusions were reached. In this and similar contexts, oral explanation alone does not constitute persuasive other evidence. However, oral evidence may be used to clarify other written evidence.

A29. In addition, more reliable, objective evidence may be required depending on the nature of the test and the objective the auditor is trying to achieve. For example, if there is a high risk of a material misstatement with respect to a particular assertion, then the auditor should obtain and document sufficient procedures for the auditor to conclude on the fairness of the assertion.

### Impracticality

A30. Some commenters expressed concern that the proposed standard could be construed or interpreted to require the auditor to document every conversation held with company management or among the engagement team members. Some commenters also argued that they should not be required to document every conclusion, including preliminary conclusions that were part of a thought process that may have led them to a different conclusion, on the ground that this would result in needless and costly work performed by the auditor. Commenters also expressed concern that an unqualified requirement to document procedures performed, evidence obtained, and conclusions reached without allowing the use of auditor judgment would increase the volume of documentation but not the quality. They stated that it would be unnecessary, time-consuming, and potentially counterproductive to require the auditor to make a written record of everything he or she did.

A31. The Board's standard distinguishes between (1) an audit procedure that must be documented and (2) a conversation with company management or among the members of the engagement team. Inquiries with management should be documented when an inquiry is important to a particular procedure. The inquiry could take place during planning, performance, or reporting. The auditor need not document each conversation that occurred.

A32. A final conclusion is an integral part of a working paper, unless the working paper is only for informational purposes, such as documentation of a discussion or a process. This standard does not require that the auditor document each interim conclusion reached in arriving at the risk assessments or final conclusions. Conclusions reached early on during an audit may be based on incomplete information or an incorrect understanding. Nevertheless, auditors should document a final conclusion for every audit procedure performed, if that conclusion is not readily apparent based on documented results of the procedures.

A33. The Board also believes the reference to *specialists* is an important element of paragraph 6. Specialists play a vital role in audit engagements. For example, appraisers, actuaries, and environmental consultants provide valuable data concerning asset values, calculation assumptions, and loss reserves. When using the work of a specialist, the auditor must ensure that the specialist's work, as it relates to the audit objectives, also is adequately documented. For example, if the auditor relies on the work of an appraiser in obtaining the fair value of commercial property available for sale, then the auditor must ensure the appraisal report is adequately documented. Moreover, the term *specialist* in this standard is intended to include any specialist the auditor relies on in conducting the work, including those employed or retained by the auditor or by the company.

### ***Audit Adjustments***

A34. Several commenters recommended that the definition of *audit adjustments* in this proposed standard should be consistent with the definition contained in AU sec. 380, *Communication with Audit Committees*.

A35. Although the Board recognizes potential benefits of having a uniform definition of the term *audit adjustments*, the Board does not believe that the definition in AU sec. 380 is appropriate for this documentation standard because that definition was intended for communication with audit committees. The Board believes that the definition should be broader so that the engagement partner, engagement quality reviewer, and others can be aware of all proposed corrections of misstatements, whether or not recorded by the entity, of which the auditor is aware, that were or should have been proposed based on the audit evidence.

A36. Adjustments that should have been proposed based on known audit evidence are material misstatements that the auditor identified but did not propose to management. Examples include situations in which (1) the auditor identifies a material error but does not propose an adjustment and (2) the auditor proposes an adjustment in the working papers, but fails to note the adjustment in the summary or schedule of proposed adjustments.

### ***Information That Is Inconsistent with or Contradicts the Auditor's Final Conclusions***

A37. Paragraph .25 of AU sec. 326, *Evidential Matter*, states: "In developing his or her opinion, the auditor should consider relevant evidential matter regardless of whether it appears to corroborate or to contradict the assertions in the financial statements." Thus, during the conduct of an audit, the auditor should consider all relevant evidential matter even though it might contradict or be inconsistent with other conclusions. Audit documentation must contain information or data relating to significant findings or issues that are inconsistent with the auditor's final conclusions on the relevant matter.

A38. Also, information that initially appears to be inconsistent or contradictory, but is found to be incorrect or based on incomplete information, need not be included in the final audit documentation, provided that the apparent inconsistencies or contradictions were satisfactorily resolved by obtaining complete and correct information. In addition, with respect to differences in professional judgment, auditors need not include in audit documentation preliminary views based on incomplete information or data.

### ***Retention of Audit Documentation***

A39. The proposed standard would have required an auditor to retain audit documentation for seven years after completion of the engagement, which is the

minimum period permitted under Section 103(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Act. In addition, the proposed standard would have added a new requirement that the audit documentation must be assembled for retention within a reasonable period of time after the auditor's report is released. Such reasonable period of time should not exceed 45 days.

A40. In general, those commenting on this documentation retention requirement did not have concerns with the time period of 45 days to assemble the working papers. However, some commenters suggested the Board tie this 45-day requirement to the filing date of the company's financial statements with the SEC. One commenter recommended that the standard refer to the same trigger date for initiating both the time period during which the auditor should complete work paper assembly and the beginning of the seven-year retention period.

A41. For consistency and practical implications, the Board agreed that the standard should have the same date for the auditor to start assembling the audit documentation and initiating the seven-year retention period. The Board decided that the seven-year retention period begins on the *report release date*, which is defined as the date the auditor grants permission to use the auditor's report in connection with the issuance of the company's financial statements. In addition, auditors will have 45 days to assemble the complete and final set of audit documentation, beginning on the report release date. The Board believes that using the report release date is preferable to using the filing date of the company's financial statements, since the auditor has ultimate control over granting permission to use his or her report. If an auditor's report is not issued, then the audit documentation is to be retained for seven years from the date that fieldwork was substantially completed. If the auditor was unable to complete the engagement, then the seven-year period begins when the work on the engagement ceased.

### ***Section 802 of Sarbanes-Oxley and the SEC's Implementing Rule***

A42. Many commenters had concerns about the similarity in language between the proposed standard and the SEC final rule (issued in January 2003) on record retention, *Retention of Records Relevant to Audits and Reviews*.<sup>4/</sup> Some commenters recommended that the PCAOB undertake a project to identify and resolve all differences between the proposed standard and the SEC's final rule. These commenters also suggested that the Board include similar language from the SEC final rule, Rule 2-06 of Regulation S-X, which limits the requirement to retain some items.

#### **Differences between Section 802 and This Standard**

A43. The objective of the Board's standard is different from the objective of the SEC's rule on record retention. The objective of the Board's standard is to require auditors to

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<sup>4/</sup> SEC Regulation S-X, 17 C.F.R. § 210.2-06 (SEC Release No. 33-8180, January 2003). (The final rule was effective in March 2003.)

*create* certain documentation to enhance the quality of audit documentation, thereby improving the quality of audits and other related engagements. The records retention section of this standard, mandated by Section 103 of the Act, requires registered public accounting firms to "prepare and maintain for a period of not less than 7 years, *audit work papers, and other information related to any audit report*, in sufficient detail to support the conclusions reached in such report." (emphasis added)

A44. In contrast, the focus of the SEC rule is to require auditors to *retain* documents that the auditor does create, in order that those documents will be available in the event of a regulatory investigation or other proceeding. As stated in the release accompanying the SEC's final rule (SEC Release No. 33-8180):

Section 802 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act is intended to address the destruction or fabrication of evidence and the preservation of "financial and audit records." We are directed under that section to promulgate rules related to the retention of records relevant to the audits and reviews of financial statements that companies file with the Commission.

A45. The SEC release further states, "New rule 2-06 ... addresses the retention of documents relevant to enforcement of the securities laws, Commission rules, and criminal laws."

A46. Despite their different objectives, the proposed standard and SEC Rule 2-06 use similar language in describing documentation generated during an audit or review. Paragraph 4 of the proposed standard stated that, "Audit documentation ordinarily consists of *memoranda, correspondence, schedules, and other documents created or obtained in connection with the engagement* and may be in the form of paper, electronic files, or other media." Paragraph (a) of SEC Rule 2-06 describes "records relevant to the audit or review" that must be retained as, (1) "workpapers and other documents that form the basis of the audit or review and (2) *memoranda, correspondence, communications, other documents, and records (including electronic records), which: [a]re created, sent or received in connection with the audit or review and [c]ontain conclusions, opinions, analyses, or financial data related to the audit or review. ...*" (numbering and emphasis added).

A47. The SEC makes a distinction between the objectives of categories (1) and (2). Category (1) includes audit documentation. Documentation to be retained according to the Board's standard clearly falls within category (1). Items in category (2) include "desk files" which are more than "what traditionally has been thought of as auditor's 'workpapers'." The SEC's rule requiring auditors to retain items in category (2) have the principal purpose of facilitating enforcement of securities laws, SEC rules, and criminal laws. This is not an objective of the Board's standard. According to SEC Rule 2-06, items in category (2) are limited to those which: (a) are created, sent or received in connection with the audit or review, and (b) contain conclusions, opinions, analyses, or

financial data related to the audit or review. The limitations, (a) and (b), do not apply to category (1).

A48. Paragraph 4 of the final standard deletes the reference in the proposed standard to "other documents created or obtained in connection with the engagement." The Board decided to keep "correspondence" in the standard because correspondence can be valid audit evidence. Paragraph 20 of the standard reminds the auditor that he or she may be required to maintain documentation in addition to that required by this standard.

### **Significant Matters and Significant Findings or Issues**

A49. Some commenters asked how the term *significant matters*, in Rule 2-06, relates to the term *significant findings or issues* in the Board's standard. The SEC's release accompanying its final Rule 2-06 states that "... *significant matters* is intended to refer to the documentation of substantive matters that are important to the audit or review process or to the financial statements of the issuer. ..." This is very similar to the term *significant findings or issues* contained in paragraph 12 of the Board's standard which requires auditors to document *significant findings or issues*, actions taken to address them (including additional evidence obtained), and the basis for the conclusions reached. Examples of significant findings or issues are provided in the standard.

A50. Based on the explanation in the SEC's final rule and accompanying release, the Board believes that *significant matters* are included in the meaning of *significant findings or issues* in the Board's standard. The Board is of the view that *significant findings or issues* is more comprehensive and provides more clarity than *significant matters* and, therefore, has not changed the wording in the final standard.

### **Changes to Audit Documentation**

A51. The proposed standard would have required that any changes to the working papers after completion of the engagement be documented without deleting or discarding the original documents. Such documentation must indicate the date the information was added, by whom it was added, and the reason for adding it.

A52. One commenter recommended that the Board provide examples of auditing procedures that should be performed before the report release date and procedures that may be performed after the report release date. Some commenters also requested clarification about the treatment of changes to documentation that occurred after the completion of the engagement but before the report release date. Many commenters recommended that the Board more specifically describe post-issuance procedures. The Board generally agreed with these comments.